

Chapter 2

COLLECTING MATERIALS

I. INTRODUCTION¹

This chapter describes the process of acquiring archival materials. In sequential order we will detail the construction of a collection policy, discuss the crucial role that this document plays in the focused selection of historical records, describe the mechanisms employed to secure legal custody of archival papers and secure their physical integrity, and propose a filing system to ensure access to the documentation that is generated in the management of an archival collection.

II. THE COLLECTION POLICY

A collection policy is the foundational acquisition tool. It is a written statement that clearly describes the purpose of your repository, the specific subjects and formats that you will collect, and the procedures and processes that you will employ to acquire records. In aggregate, this information provides your collecting archivists with the context necessary to judge a proposed collection's relevance and value to your mission. Ad hoc collecting in the absence of a collection policy can easily result in a number of undesirable outcomes, including the creation of an irrelevant collection, misuse of resources, and duplication of another institution's efforts. Lastly, a well established collection policy is a very useful document to have when you are explaining your decision not to accept a collection to a disappointed donor.

In order for a collection policy to be an effective tool, it must be grounded in a current and realistic understanding of your institution's particular circumstances. The preliminary step in the creation of this policy is to carry out an introspective examination of your institution's mission, collections, capabilities, and resources. To aid this process you should consider the following broad questions and their collecting implications:

- Is your institution charged with a specific mission? How is this mission served by your historical records program?
- In light of your repository's mission and goals, what are the strengths and weaknesses of your current collections?
- What resources (both material and intellectual) are dependably available to support your collections?

¹ This chapter is heavily based on text, exercises and outlines created by Tim Pyatt.

Because a collection policy is a comprehensive document about your institution's archival holdings and acquisition practices, the process of writing one is best approached not as the construction of a flowing narrative, but as the assembly of a series of discrete elements. The following fictional example presents the major elements that are included in a fully developed collection policy.

<p style="text-align: center;">Carolina Azalea Garden Archive Collection Policy</p> <p>The mission of The Carolina Azalea Garden Archive (CAGA) is to identify, collect, preserve and make accessible for research and reference use by the staff, scholars and other researchers, the historical records of The Carolina Azalea Garden (CAG). These collections are comprised of non-current records of varying formats having enduring administrative, legal, fiscal, historical, or scientific value created by the staff and volunteers of CAG.</p> <p>CAGA acquires materials in various formats, including but not limited to papers, notebooks, botanical samples, films, drawings, photographs, maps, and pamphlets. CAGA will select audio-visual, microform, and machine readable records on a case by case basis due to the Archive's limited ability to provide access and proper care and storage for these media formats.</p> <p>Archival materials may be acquired by The Carolina Azalea Garden Archive by gift, bequest, purchase, administrative transfer, or any other legal transaction that transfers title of the materials to the Archive. CAGA will accept materials as loans or deposits when the conditions for acceptance are judged to be favorable to the Archive. CAGA will not accept collections that are closed to public access in perpetuity and will not ordinarily accept collections that are closed for a period of more than five years.</p> <p>Duplicates, unsupported formats, and other materials that do not reflect the collection policy of The Carolina Azalea Garden Archive may be deaccessioned by the archivist, subject to the terms of acquisition, Carolina Azalea Garden Archive regulations, and state and federal laws.</p>	<p>I. Repository Name</p> <p>II. Repository Purpose</p> <p>III. Subject Emphasis</p> <p>IV. Acceptable Formats</p> <p>V. Acquisition Procedures</p> <p>VI. Removal Procedures</p> <p>VII. Loan Policy</p> <p>VIII. Review Process</p>
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Having reviewed the elements that comprise a collection policy in context, it may now be helpful to dissect the Azalea Garden's Collection Policy with an eye to better understanding the considerations that underlay the construction of each element.

Identity and Purpose

A collection policy's first paragraph is typically a brief statement that clearly and succinctly states the repository's name, institutional affiliation, and mission. From the above example, we have learned that:

The mission of The Carolina Azalea Garden Archive (CAGA) is to identify, collect, preserve and make accessible for research and reference use by the staff, scholars and other researchers, the historical records of The Carolina Azalea Garden (CAG). These collections are comprised of non-current records of varying formats having enduring administrative, legal, fiscal, historical, or scientific value created by the staff and volunteers of CAG.

Using this example as a template, the introductory section of your collection policy should be sure to explain your repository's relationship and obligations to its parent institution, the basic archival activities your repository will carry out, the general subject matter it seeks to document and the types of researchers that it will serve.

Subjects and Formats

Because CAGA is an institutional archive that exists to preserve and make accessible the documents produced by the Carolina Azalea Garden, it was not necessary for its archivists to specify the repository's subject foci or collecting themes in great detail. It was sufficient to state that it collects "non-current records of varying formats having enduring administrative, legal, fiscal, historical, or scientific value created by the staff and volunteers of CAG." The focus of your repository's collecting might not be so discrete or so briefly described. Whatever the case, you should provide a level of description detailed enough to guide selection decisions.

Along with a description of your collecting themes, you should describe the types of material formats (e.g., manuscripts, photographs, videotapes, etc.) that your program will consider including in its collection. You may also wish to detail those particular formats that your program will not consider as well as material condition issues (e.g., active mold, extensive reformatting, sticky shed, etc.) that are too problematic for inclusion in your collection. Returning to our sample collection policy, CAGA collects:

. . . various formats, including but not limited to papers, notebooks, botanical samples, films, drawings, photographs, maps, and pamphlets. CAGA will select audio-visual, microform, and machine readable records only on a case by case basis due to the Archive's limited ability to provide access and proper care and storage for these media formats.

Methods of Acquisition

The acquisition of archival material involves the legal transfer, either permanent or temporary, of private property. Your collection policy should briefly describe the mechanisms that your repository will employ to add archival material to its holdings. Common methods include the solicitation of donations, purchases, loans, and institutional transfers. On occasion, a proposed archival collection will have a series of conditions attached to it. Typically, these sorts of conditions restrict your repository's full control over the material by either limiting researcher access to the collections or by granting your repository temporary custody of the collection. In the course of reviewing your repository's acquisition practices, it is important that you consider the ramifications of accepting a loaned or heavily restricted collection. You may not be able to construct a universally applicable response, but the process will prepare you for addressing these eventualities.

Discarding and Loaning Materials

In the course of reviewing your collections you may discover that your repository has items in its holdings that for any number of reasons (e.g., irrelevant subject matter, duplication, inappropriate format, material condition, etc.) fall outside of the parameters you have established in your collection policy. If these out-of-scope materials are judged to be unworthy of further support, what procedures will be employed to remove or deaccession them? In developing your program's deaccessioning policy it is important to define the process that your institution has established for removing items from its collections. In describing these practices you should be sure to explicitly state who has the authority to remove archival materials. The CAGA collection policy states:

Duplicates, unsupported formats, and other materials that do not reflect the collection policy of The Carolina Azalea Garden Archive may be deaccessioned by the archivist, subject to the terms of acquisition, Carolina Azalea Garden Archive regulations, and state and federal laws.

Similarly, you should describe the conditions and procedures that will govern the loaning of an item from your collections to another institution. As with deaccessioning, it is crucial that you specify the person or persons who hold the authority to authorize a loan as well as a general set of criteria that the exhibiting institution must agree to meet. In lieu of writing an extensive set of loan conditions detailing such things as expected standards of care and handling or insurance requirements, CAGA has relied upon the American Library Association's "Guidelines for Borrowing Special Collections Materials for Exhibition."²

Collection Policy Review

In the collection policy's final paragraph, CAGA describes the review process that it employs to keep the collection policy current and relevant to its institutional mission. Additionally, your

²"Guidelines for Borrowing Special Collections Materials for Exhibition," Association of College and Research Libraries at <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/guidelinesborrowing.htm>.

collection policy review process should specify the events (e.g., change in governing authority or passing of a certain date) that will trigger the review and renewal process.

Collection Policy Exercise

Having reviewed the purposes and composition of a collection policy, it is time for you to attempt the construction of some select collection policy elements based on the fictional scenario presented below.

In 1992, the Seagrove Pottery Museum and Archive was established by the Seagrove Pottery Guild to help document the pottery renaissance that has been occurring in and around Seagrove, North Carolina during the last 20 years. While the Museum has focused on collecting and preserving the material culture (e.g., pottery and pottery tools) of this artistic movement, the Archive has been principally engaged with the task of preserving its documentary records. These records include the personal and business papers of individual potters and galleries as well as the official organizational papers of the Pottery Guild. The Archive has also established an oral history program that conducts audio taped interviews with the artists whose works are in the Museum.

Through its Board of Directors, the Guild exercises an oversight role, but it has hired a curator and an archivist to run the day-to-day operations of the Museum and Archive. These two full-time professionals are aided by a number of volunteers, whose ranks typically include several retired potters and two to three students from a nearby library school.

The Museum and Archive are housed together in a modern climate controlled building which is open to the public two days a week and by appointment. The Archive operates a reading room that has two audio tape machines for patrons interested in listening to the oral histories. Photocopying of documents is allowable at the staff's discretion.

Given this scenario and reasoned assumptions, create the following for the Seagrove Archive:

1. Write a Statement of Purpose
2. Describe the various subject foci or collecting themes
3. List appropriate formats

III. ARCHIVAL APPRAISAL

If your collection policy describes your repository's ideal collection, appraisal is the imperfect process of assessing real collections against this hypothetical ideal. As with the collection policy itself, the purposes of appraisal are to ensure that an acquired collection supports your repository's mission and to conserve your repository's resources (e.g., staff time, money, shelf space, etc.) by rejecting materials that are not appropriate.

Stripped to its core, archival appraisal is best understood as a critical review of a proposed collection that seeks to answer two vital questions:

- Is the collection historically valuable?
- Is the collection an appropriate addition to your holdings?

Although seeming clear, these questions raise two critical issues worth brief consideration. First, with the occasional exception, archival appraisal involves the assessment of a collection of records rather than that of an individual document. In archival literature this sort of initial appraisal is generally referred to as collection level appraisal. The second issue raised by these questions is a bit philosophical and thorny: what is value?

As this manual has explained, archival value is contextual. If a collection fits within the parameters that your repository has established, it should be deemed valuable and considered for inclusion in your holdings. But there is a larger discussion of value in the archival literature that can usefully inform your appraisal practice. This discussion essentially parses the holistic notion of value into a series of component values. Archivists refer to these sub-types as informational value, evidential value, and intrinsic value.³ Informational value refers to the relevance of the content, data or facts that are transmitted by a collection or document. For instance, a collection of newspaper clippings about the Seagrove Pottery Guild or its official correspondence would have a high level of information value for the Seagrove Pottery Archive. Evidential value of a collection rests in its ability to tell us about the activities or functions of its creator. If, for example, the Pottery Archive were assessing a potter's papers, the contents (e.g., paint swatches, leaves or flowers, magazine clippings, chemical formulas, etc.) and order of his files might reveal the manner in which he invented or acquired glaze recipes. Lastly, intrinsic value is an assessment of the collection or document as a unique and irreproducible item that has value independent of either its evidential or informational value. For example, the papers of Ben Owen, one of the most famous of Seagrove's potters, would have a high degree of intrinsic value because they are his papers.

It is well worth noting that archival appraisal is not an assessment of monetary value. Although the monetary value of a collection is often an important acquisition issue, it is not a function that is normally within the professional competence of archivists. In fact, to protect your institution's interests it is best to obtain the services of an independent appraiser when you find it necessary to determine a fair valuation for the purposes of purchase or donation.⁴

The Practice of Appraisal

For the appraisal process to be most effective it is best to approach it in a rigorous and systematic way. This is especially true if you are inexperienced with appraisal. The steps outlined below are a

³ For a fuller discussion of the terminology of archival value see, the Society of American Archivists' "A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology," by Richard Pearce-Moses at <http://www.archivists.org/glossary/index.asp>.

⁴ The Manuscripts Department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill maintains a list of local independent appraisers at <http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/apraise.html>.

bit schematic, but they do present a regularized way to gather the information that you need to carry out a well informed evaluation.

Step 1

Gain a fuller sense of the informational and material content of the proposed collection through a combination of speaking with the donor and a physical inspection of the materials. During this review, you should find answers to the following questions:

Informational Content

- **Who created the collection?** Think both specifically and generally. For instance, Thomas Wolfe, North Carolina author, Asheville resident, University of North Carolina alumnus; or Rose's Stores, Department Stores, Henderson, NC businesses.
- **When was the collection created?** Think in terms of an encompassing range as well as dense clusters. For instance, 1905-1972, but the bulk are from the 1960s.
- **Why was the collection created?** What activities of the creator does the collection reflect? Writing novels or selling merchandise.
- **What kinds of information are in the collection?** Drafts of literary works, subject clippings files, correspondence with publishers, diaries; or store accounts, cancelled checks, bank loans, real estate papers.
- **Where was the collection created?** What is the geography of these documents? Asheville, Henderson, New York.

Material Content

- **What formats are present in the collection?** Loose papers, bound volumes, scrapbooks, cased photographs, black and white photographs, negatives, wire recordings, floppy discs.
- **What is the condition of the collection?** Is the collection dirty, water-stained, or infested with pests? Is film showing evidence of Vinegar syndrome or is there mold on the cassette tapes?

Step 2

How does the information that you have gathered about the collection compare with the idealized version that is described in your collection policy? Specifically:

- **Does the informational content fall within the subject and material parameters that have been established in your collection policy?** Does your institution seek to collect drafts of novels by a North Carolinian? Does acquiring the official corporate records of a department store founded in Henderson serve your institutional mission?

- **Does the material content fall within the format and condition limits detailed in your collection policy?** Can your institution support home movies of the Wolfe family or corporate minutes on microfilm? What if the film is suffering from Vinegar Syndrome?

Step 3

If after this process of review, you are satisfied that the papers fall within the parameters that have been established in your collection policy you should probably accept the materials. Similarly, if the papers are judged to be a poor candidate for inclusion, you should probably reject them. But there are some other less tangible, but no less real factors that should be considered before you make a final decision.

- **Are there likely to be broader political effects for your institution if the records are accepted or rejected?** Records can be read as symbols of a larger cultural or political debate and the act of including or excluding them from your holdings could be similarly read as a political or cultural statement. Is making such a statement in your institution's interests? Does it serve your mission?
- **Considering who the donor is, are there likely to be positive or negative effects on your institution if the records are accepted or rejected?**
- **If an exception is made to the guidelines set down in the collection policy, and a collection is accepted or rejected on more than its merits, what precedent will be established?**

Box and Item Level Appraisal

Collection level appraisal is a macro-level assessment of a collection's appropriateness for inclusion. Of necessity, this initial assessment is a cursory review of the materials to assess their condition and reaffirm the description of the materials as presented by the donor. In practice, this means that the processing archivist, who will become the most knowledgeable person about the overall contents of a collection, will be the person best able to appraise the value of materials at the sub-collection level. It is typical for a collection to contain materials that are judged unworthy of being retained. Typical candidates for removal include:

- **Duplicate Materials.** This is especially true for collections created after the wide spread dissemination of the photocopy machine. Also, if you are collecting an institution's official papers, it is important to be aware of the record copy and to avoid collecting the many duplicates.
- **Materials Lacking Research Value.** This is, of course, a variable assessment based on your knowledge of your holdings, collection policy, and the research practices of your users. Typically, this might include: non-unique published materials that exist elsewhere, envelopes, checks, blank paper, memorabilia, etc.

- **Sensitive or Confidential Materials.** It is quite common for collections to contain materials that contain sensitive personal information. Typical sensitive materials include: credit card and banking numbers, social security numbers, passports, identification cards, unredeemed checks, medical and education records, job performance reviews, and recommendations. Depending on your institutional role, control and dissemination of some of these records may be regulated by Federal or State laws.

Disposal of these unwanted materials, especially those of a sensitive or confidential nature, must be carefully handled and carried out in accordance with the conditions specified in the Deed of Gift or other acquisition contract.

Collection Level Appraisal Exercise

For the purposes of this exercise you are the Archivist for the Seagrove Pottery Archive. Based on the earlier scenario and the collection policy elements you created, appraise the following collections for possible inclusion in your repository. You may decide to accept or reject any or all of the collections, but list your concerns and observations. Devise a rationale for your decisions.

I. The Seagrove Chamber of Commerce Records: The Chamber of Commerce has offered your archive 50 linear feet of records dating from 1975 to 1995. The collection contains minutes of monthly meetings, an extensive correspondence file, photographs of members at local events, publications, and other associated materials. The Chamber has played an integral role in promoting the interests of the Seagrove business community, and currently, it has a number of members who are potters and/or gallery owners. Topically, the papers contain references to local politics, the establishment of the N.C. Zoological Park in Asheboro, and various Seagrove Potteries. The papers are in original chronological order and good condition. The formats represented consist primarily of paper and photographic materials.

II. The Alfred Braxton Foushee Papers: Foushee, who was an art professor at UNC-Greensboro and an early collector and proponent of Seagrove Pottery, has offered to donate 10 linear feet of his personal papers dating from the 1980s to the present. Portions of the professor's extensive pottery collection are on loan to various museums including the Seagrove Pottery Museum, the Ackland Art Museum, and the Mint Museum of Art. In addition to his collecting activities, Foushee wrote a number of works about Seagrove's potters and their creations, including *New Traditionalists: The Potters of Seagrove* (1988) and *Red Clay and Salt Glaze: The Pottery of H. Broadus Crabtree* (1993). The papers he has offered cluster into three topical groupings: teaching files relating to his art courses at the university, research and writing files for his books, and business records regarding his pottery collection. The formats represented in the collection are chiefly paper, photographs, and some audio tapes. The materials are in good shape, but the files are ordered in a very haphazard manner.

III. Oxendine Pottery, Inc. Records: The owner of this now defunct Pottery has offered your archive 30 linear feet of corporate records dating from 1945-1980. During the 1950s and 1960s, this company, which was located in rural Robeson County, was the largest commercial pottery manufacturer in North Carolina. Its main business was the mass production of inexpensive ceramic products (e.g., ashtrays, vases, mugs, etc.) for everyday use, however, a number of its potters, particularly the Locklear brothers, created individual pieces that have had a significant impact on the works of contemporary North Carolina potters and artisans. The offered materials relate to the business operations of the pottery and include business correspondence, personnel records, ceramic design drawings, glaze recipes, photographs of the plant and workers, and the firing records of the kilns. The papers have been kept in their original file cabinets in Mr. Oxendine's basement for almost 25 years and have suffered periodic water damage. In addition to water staining, there is inactive mold and some insect damage.

IV. ACCESSIONING

Accessioning is the term that archivists use to describe the process of adding materials to their repository's holdings. This in-take process has two distinct components. The initial stage involves the legal transfer (either temporary or permanent) of the records to the repository. The second stage involves the preliminary documentation of the content of the materials and the assumption of the physical control of the materials. Pending further archival processing, the accessioning process provides a basic but essential level of control over the materials entrusted to your repository. Our discussion of the process will begin with the problem of establishing legal control.

Legal Control: Its nature and limits

The historical records that archivists seek to collect are legally complex objects. As expressive works, these records are subject to the legal standards and traditions of both physical and intellectual property law. The duality inherent in written or recorded works is easiest to understand when one considers a relatively simple work, such as the book that you are currently reading at night before bed. This book has a physical nature. It is owned, perhaps by you, your neighbor, or your public library. The owner of the book can legally loan it, give it away, or even sell it, but she cannot run off copies of the book for similar purposes. Why not? Because the rights to reproduce the expressions within the book, unless they are in the public domain (a book published prior to 1923), are monopolistically owned by their creator.

What is true for books is true for all written and recorded works, published and unpublished.⁵ For instance, if you decided to accept the Foushee Collection and the professor agreed to donate his papers to the Seagrove Pottery Archive, the repository would now "own" the papers in the sense that the library or your friend owns the book that you are reading. Additionally, to the extent that it was made explicit, the professor may have transferred the intellectual property rights that he controlled to the archive, but those intellectual property rights that he did not own would not transfer (e.g., received correspondence, manuscripts of books and articles that he wrote, etc.). In most instances, the implications of this sort of situation are more academic than real, but this example does suggest that the seemingly simple act of giving your users permission to publish excerpts from your holdings is a problematic one. One way of protecting your institution from wasted staff hours and possible legal problems is to explicitly shift the onus of copyright verification to your users by clearly stating in your findings aids and on any copies made the Copyright Notice, which states "Copyright is retained by the authors of items in these papers, or their descendants, as stipulated by United States copyright law."

Lastly, to protect your repository's best interests, you should consult with your legal counsel to make certain that your copyright practices adhere to the most current copyright laws.

⁵ For an indispensable presentation of copyright and public domain see Peter Hirtle's "Copyright and the Public Domain in the United States as of 1 January 2005" at http://www.copyright.cornell.edu/training/Hirtle_Public_Domain.htm.

Practice of Assuming Legal Control

The transfer of legal custody is most commonly accomplished using one of three types of legal documents: a Purchase Agreement, a Deed of Gift Agreement, or a Deposit Agreement.⁶ These legally binding documents serve as a form of legal and scholarly evidence that attests to your repository's right to possess the documents as well as the authenticity and integrity of the collection itself. As such, these contracts must be maintained as a permanent and integral part of your archives' holdings.

The three forms briefly discussed below will need to be tailored to meet your repository's unique needs. You will also need to establish a process to determine who will be vested with the authority to sign legal documents on behalf of your repository. Lastly and most importantly, have your legal counsel review your proposed forms.

Purchase Agreement

A purchase agreement can be used to document your institution's purchase of historical records. Depending upon the standards of documentation required by your repository and its legal counsel, this type of document can range from a formal and detailed contract to a fairly simple Bill of Sale.

Deed of Gift Agreement⁷

A Deed of Gift agreement is used in those instances when ownership of a collection is donated to a repository without the exchange of funds. It is a signed legally binding document that records the fact that the materials being transferred are a gift and it describes the legal relationships that exist between the repository, the donor, and the materials. As with all of the legal documents used to transfer legal custody of records, there is no singular prescriptive form that a Deed of Gift must assume; however, given the functions that the Deed of Gift is designed to play, the elements listed below have become typical and are largely present in the fictional sample form that follows.

- **Name of donor**
- **Name of the receiving repository**
- **Title and summary description of collection**
- **Transfer of ownership statement**
- **Access restrictions**
- **Disposal criteria and authority**
- **Dated signatures of the donor and recipient**

⁶ The Society of American Archivists and ARMA International have published a very useful book, Sample Forms for Archival and Records Management Programs (2002) that contains several paper and electronic versions of these forms that your repository could alter to meet its needs. The volume is available for purchase at <http://www.archivists.org/catalog/pubDetail.asp?objectID=719>.

⁷ The Society of American Archivists has created an online pamphlet, "A Guide to Deeds of Gift," at http://www.archivists.org/publications/deed_of_gift.asp. It explains this document in a very clear style devoid of archival or legal jargon.

Deed of Gift

Seagrove Pottery Archive	2356 North Church Street, Asheboro, North Carolina 27203	(336) 555-4998 Arch@seagrove.org
Date 1-23-2006	Accession Number(s) 2006-02	
Donor Alfred Braxton Foushee	Street 4526 Main Street	City/State/ZIP Greensboro, NC 27401
Contact Person Alfred Braxton Foushee	Telephone / E-mail (336) 555-1701 or ArtProf@hotmail.com	
<p>The donation has been received by the Archives as a gift, and the owner or his agent with full authority, desiring to absolutely transfer full title by signing below, hereby gives, assigns, and conveys finally and completely, and without any limitation or reservation, the property described below to the Archives and its successors and assigns permanently and forever, together with (when applicable) any copyrights therein and the right to copyright the same.</p> <p>Special Note: Discards and duplicate materials are to be returned to the donor.</p>		
<p>Description of Donation</p> <p>The Papers consist of the private collection of materials bought, collected, and produced by ALFRED BRAXTON FOUSHEE from 1980 to the present. This includes correspondence, oral history tapes and transcriptions, newspaper clippings, business records, photographs and slides, notebooks, and manuscripts (published and unpublished).</p>		
<p>Credit Line</p> <p>Received from Alfred Braxton Foushee of Greensboro, N.C., in January 2006.</p>		
<p>Signatures</p> <p>Donor Alfred Braxton Foushee Date 1-23-2006</p> <p>Printed Name Alfred Braxton Foushee</p> <p>Director M.K. Maxton Date 1-23-2006</p>		
<p>Conditions Governing Gifts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is understood that all gifts are outright and unconditional unless otherwise noted upon this gift agreement. 2. Gifts to the Archives may be deductible in accordance with provisions of federal income tax laws. 3. The donor name on this form has not received any goods or services from the Archives in return for this gift. 4. The staff of the Archives is not permitted to furnish appraisals. 5. The Archives gratefully acknowledges your gift. 6. Please indicate on the form beside "CREDIT LINE" how you would like to be acknowledged in any news releases, exhibit labels, or other publicity regarding this donation. 		

Deed of Gift from "Sample Forms for Archival and Records Management Programs (2002)." Reprinted by permission of the Society of American Archivists (www.archivists.org) and ARMA International (www.arma.org).

Deposit Agreements

A deposit or loan agreement is used to document your institution's agreement to house and make accessible materials that someone else continues to own. With the exception of temporary loans for exhibition or other limited scholarly purposes, most archivists are wary of deposit agreements. This hesitancy stems from the fear that a depositor may decide to withdraw a collection after the expenditure of a considerable amount of your institution's resources. If it is decided that a deposit agreement must be used, it is often suggested that the repository negotiate some sort of sunset clause fully transferring the materials to it after a set period of time or an event, such as the donor's death.

<p>DEPOSIT AGREEMENT BETWEEN</p> <p>SEAGROVE POTTERY ARCHIVE</p> <p>AND</p>	
<p>NAME: ALFRED BRAXTON FOUSHEE</p>	
<p>ADDRESS: 4526 MAIN STREET</p>	
<p>CITY: GREENSBORO STATE: NORTH CAROLINA ZIP CODE: 27401-3487</p>	
<p>TELEPHONE NUMBER: (336) 555-1701</p>	
<p>DESCRIPTION OF ITEMS ON DEPOSIT: This agreement covers the deposit of the "ALFRED BRAXTON FOUSHEE PAPERS," hereafter referred to as "Papers."</p>	
<p>The Papers consist of the private collection of materials bought, collected, and produced by ALFRED BRAXTON FOUSHEE from 1980 to the present. This includes correspondence, oral history tapes and transcriptions, newspaper clippings, business records, photographs and slides, notebooks, and manuscripts (published and unpublished).</p>	
<p>APPROXIMATE VALUE OF ITEMS: A third party appraisal valued the collection at \$10,000.00</p>	
<p>INSURANCE WILL BE CARRIED BY: Seagrove Pottery Archive's Insurance Carrier</p>	
<p>I own the materials described above and voluntarily agree to deposit them with the SEAGROVE POTTERY ARCHIVE, with the intention of transferring title to said organization upon my death. At that time all rights, title and interest I possess in these materials will transfer and be assigned to said organization.</p>	
<p>No arrangement or preservation work may be performed on these materials without my written permission. The repository is responsible for all damages, accidental or otherwise, that occurs to the material while in its custody. A description of these materials may be added to the access records of the organization.</p>	
<p>Access to these records is permitted and unrestricted. The records may be reproduced with the supervision of the Seagrove Pottery Archive.</p>	
<p>I agree to the above conditions of deposit and I am authorized to agree thereto:</p>	
<p>For the: Depositor</p>	<p>For the: Seagrove Pottery Archive</p>
<p>Signature: Alfred Braxton Foushee</p>	<p>Signature: M.K. Maxton</p>
<p>Title: Professor</p>	<p>Title: Seagrove Pottery Archive Archivist</p>
<p>Date: 1-23-2006</p>	<p>Date: 1-23-2006</p>

Physical and Intellectual Control

The second phase of accessioning is intended to provide a basic level of physical and intellectual control over materials that have been accepted into your institution. Perhaps more clearly, this second phase is designed to provide a brief description of what you have acquired and where it has been temporarily stored. Since very few collections come in “shelf-ready,” the information and tasks performed during this in-take phase are designed to provide a minimum level of control over the collection until it can be more fully arranged and described. Typically, this phase of accessioning focuses on maintaining the physical integrity of the collection and gathering the collection’s vital statistics.

Maintaining the Collection’s Integrity

When archivists speak of maintaining the physical integrity of a collection, they are primarily concerned with making sure that the collection remains intact. In this instance, “intact” has two meanings. The first meaning of intact is that the collection must be maintained as a single, discrete unit of materials. The second meaning refers to the preservation and maintenance of any internal relationships or organizational schemes that may exist within the collection (e.g., Original Order). Archivists maintain the integrity of their collections through two related actions:

- **Upon receipt, the collection must be issued a unique identifier or Accession Number.** This code must be clearly written on every container that contains elements of the collection. The careful and thorough labeling of all elements of the collection with its assigned Accession Number is especially crucial if portions of the collection are destined to be segregated from the bulk of the collection because of condition issues (mold or pests) or storage requirements (e.g., size, temperature, etc.).

Let’s pause here to delve a little further into accession numbers. Accession numbers are used to keep track of discrete receipts of records. Thinking about the Foushee collection, it is possible that the Professor might have delivered his papers in multiple chunks over a period of months or even years. In fact, it is entirely possible that Professor Foushee has or will have similar records that he will give the Seagrove Pottery Archive in the future. Each delivery of Foushee materials will be accessioned using a separate accession number. Thus, multiple accession numbers (i.e., accessions of materials) may be cobbled together to form one collection, which has its own unique identifier, a collection number. It is also possible that the records in an accession might be distributed into multiple collections.

Finally, the construction of an accession number can be done in a number of different manners. In the fictional examples presented in this chapter, the accession number has been assembled using a very basic formula: the accession year, a separating dash, and the order in which the accession was received. For example, 2006-23 would be the accession number for the 23rd accession received in the 2006 calendar year.

- **Review of the collection and careful re-housing of the collection prior to storage.**

During the process of labeling containers, it is wise to examine the containers that the collection arrived in to determine their suitability as a storage unit; if they are unsuitable, replace them with suitable ones.⁸ If there is a meaningful order to the material, you must be careful to preserve it during this re-housing phase. At this time you may also decide that there are a number of discrete components of the collection, such as photographs, correspondence, videotapes, etc. that are made more meaningful if they are gathered together as subunits beneath one accession number. This type of preliminary and recorded sorting or “pre-processing” may help provide better access to the collection pending fuller processing.

Documenting the Accession

During accessioning, you will have gathered some important descriptive information about the collection. This information must be recorded on your institution’s standardized accession form which will provide temporary inventory control over your newly acquired holding until it can be more fully arranged and described. As with the other forms presented here, there is no singular prescriptive form that an accession form must assume, however, given the functions that it is designed to play, the elements listed below have become typical and are largely present in the fictional sample form that follows.

- **Accession number**
- **Accession date**
- **Collection title**
- **Donor’s name and address**
- **Access restrictions**
- **Storage location(s)**
- **Collection description and condition**
- **Total size of the collection**
- **Accessioning archivist**

Accession Form

Date Received 1/21/2006	Accession No. 2006-01	Accession Archivist M.K. Maxton
Name of Collection Oxendine Pottery, Inc. Records		
Donor Name and Address Mr. George Herbert Oxendine 3450 Cedar Lane, Red Spring, North Carolina 28377 (910) 555-1498		
Restrictions Personnel Records	Location Shelf 1-10, Accession Room	Total Size 30 Linear Feet (26 Boxes)

⁸ See Chapter 4, “Safekeeping your Collections” for details on appropriate storage containers.

General Description of Material Records related to the business operations of a commercial pottery.		Inclusive Dates 1945-1980, Bulk 1965-1972	
Specific Description of Material:			
<u>Type</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Size</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Audio Recordings	_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Printed Materials	1 box
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Correspondence	7 boxes	<input type="checkbox"/> Movie Film	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Diaries/Manuscripts	_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reports	1 box
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Financial Records	4 boxes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photographs	3 boxes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legal Documents	3 boxes	<input type="checkbox"/> Scrapbooks	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Maps/Charts	_____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Personnel Records, Design Drawings, Glaze Recipes, Kiln Firing Records.	
Arrangement of Material:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alphabetic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chronologic	<input type="checkbox"/> Numeric	
<input type="checkbox"/> Topical (Subject)	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Arranged	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Original File Order	
Additional Comments Stored in Donor's Basement: Some Water Staining, Insect Damage, and Inactive Mold.			

Accession Form from "Sample Forms for Archival and Records Management Programs (2002)." Reprinted by permission of the Society of American Archivists (www.archivists.org) and ARMA International (www.arma.org).

V. DOCUMENTING YOUR COLLECTIONS

It should be abundantly clear that the acquisition and management of archival collections generates a substantial paper trail. At a minimum, every collection you accept will generate a legal document transferring legal control of the papers, an accession form, and donor correspondence. Moreover, as time goes by the collection will spawn other important materials such as a descriptive finding aid and additional correspondence from users requesting copies or permission to publish excerpts. In aggregate, these documents provide the legal and scholarly evidence that your repository requires to establish its right to keep these papers and manage them properly and as such, maintaining these documents in an accessible and useful filing system is vital to the success of your repository.

As with any filing system, its success will depend on the degree to which it serves your needs and filing abilities; an overly complicated system will easily fall into disuse. At a minimum, it is important to maintain a set of Collection Files. In general, this sort of system would be filed alphabetically by collection title and it would contain the originals or copies of all the documents related to that collection.